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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000637

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [ENRG](#) [ECPS](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: (C) INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES WANT CNDD TO GO

REF: A. CONAKRY 00470
[1](#)B. CONAKRY 00624

Classified By: ECONOFF BRIANA WARNER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: DAS William Fitzgerald met with a group of foreign investors on September 7 to discuss the current political and economic landscape in Guinea. The group agreed that the security situation has limited their ability to plan for future investments. They also expressed their belief that the international community should support peacekeeping operations and demand that Dadis resign immediately. After the meeting, many of the business people received calls from the GOG demanding to know why they were at the American Embassy and what was discussed at the meeting, indicating that the GOG is starting to keep a closer eye on USG activities. END SUMMARY.

NO SECURITY, NO INVESTMENTS

[1](#)2. (C) DAS Fitzgerald met with 12 of the most prominent international companies working in Guinea on October 7 at the Embassy. Steven Din, the country manager for Rio Tinto, expressed his concern about the security situation in the country. He told Fitzgerald that due to the American Embassy's ordered departure status, as well as the rumors of wide-scale rape, he ordered all families of Rio Tinto's expatriate staff to leave the country. He also noted that he fears for his Guinean staff, who he said are continually targeted by the military because of their higher incomes. He went on to argue that the USG should focus on bringing a UN, AU, or ECOWAS peacekeeping force to Guinea as soon as possible, "before it gets worse." However, he suggested that any international peacekeeping force would be difficult to get approved, as the Chinese government would likely block any international effort to unseat the CNDD. "They are the ones who are keeping them in power in the first place," he commented (reftel).

[1](#)3. (C) When Fitzgerald explained that it would be unprecedented to support a peacekeeping force before wide-spread conflict broke out, Hanoch Dombek of Cellcom, one of Guinea's major cellular companies (and an American company), took issue. He argued that the international community "will have to send in peacekeeping forces one way or another. Why not do it before people start killing each other - because that is what is going to happen." He argued that the CNDD is such a polarizing force between the Forestiere and the other ethnic groups that it is imperative that the CNDD leaves power in order to salvage peace. However, he said the real problem is that the CNDD does not

control the military, and that soldiers will continue to run amuck until they have a leader who can. Honoch also mentioned that the CNDD often forces cellular companies to shut down their text messaging services in times of turmoil, which would explain why text messaging was out of service for the seven days after the massacre.

14. (C) Representatives from Rusal, a Russian mining interest who had their mining refinery recently expropriated, said that the CNDD must relinquish power. They pointed out that all decisions, likely including the September 28 massacre, are made by Dadis himself. According to them, no one in the government is able to make decisions or sign anything without the knowledge of a small group of people in the CNDD: Dadis, Minister of Environment Papa Koly Kourouma, Claude Pivi, or Sekouba Konate. "These personalities are everything. Without them in power, the situation will immediately resolve itself." He added that the current power structure makes every decision unpredictable and personality based.

15. (C) The Peuhl representative of Guinea Alumina quickly interjected. He argued that these four men only represent the top of a corrupt and menacing pyramid. In his opinion, the only way to better the situation is for the members of the CNDD to relinquish power and all of the Red Berets to be disarmed. He added that the CNDD actively seeking to divide the population along ethnic lines. He illustrated his point by bringing up his driver. According to him, he has employed the same Forestiere driver for nearly 2 years, and they became close friends. Since January, however, he has become

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increasingly suspicious of his employee, and fears that his every move is being reported back to Camp Alpha Yaya.

16. (C) Fitzgerald then asked the group if there was anyone in the CNDD who was honorable. Everyone at the table quickly burst into laughter. When the laughter subsided, the representative of BHP Billiton said that only the members of the government who have been marginalized, like Toto Camara, still have some honor. He added that if a government employee works for the best interest of the Guinea people, they are immediately marginalized by the CNDD. He went on to say that "there is no dialogue with the CNDD. It is now about protection."

17. (C) The Guinean representatives of BHP and Guinea Alumina both said that Guineans, for the first time, are ready to fight and die for political change. According to them, the fact that 50,000 Guineans went to the stadium to protest the CNDD is a sign of this. They also claimed that the CNDD's efforts to emphasize ethnicity are beginning to take hold, and that immediate change is necessary in order to "prevent 20,000 more deaths."

18. (C) Immediately after the meeting, several of the Guinean members of the delegation were contacted by the Ministry of Mines and the military. They were interrogated over the telephone about why they were at the Embassy and what they talked about with Fitzgerald. They also were told that their presence at the American Embassy was "noted."

COMMENT

19. (C) International investments have suffered under the CNDD, as evidenced by several expropriations and instances of military harassment. The group's calls for the removal of the

CNDD and the peacekeeping forces are certainly driven by concerns over the tenuous investment environment that the CNDD has created. However, it is important to note that many of the representatives, particularly the Guineans, seemed genuinely scared for their personal security as well as the security of their staff and families. They continually brought up the negative influence of Chinese investment as well as their hopes for an international peace keeping force.

¶10. (C) This is the first time that Embassy has heard of people being targeted for speaking with State Department officials. The extra attention on who is speaking with the Embassy is likely a result of the USG message delivered to Dadis by Fitzgerald on Monday (reftel).

BROKENSHIRE